



## From the President

Dear Members, I hope you are managing to stay well during these trying times. At this writing, we have been fortunate in SE Qld only to have some restrictions and to wear masks. But, in mid-July 2021 some 40% (i.e. 12 million) of Australians are under stay-at-home orders responding to measures taken in NSW and Victoria to control the spread of the COVID Delta strain. This reminds us how geographically concentrated and urbanised our population is.

**Demography and the pandemic – here's the big picture:** the world today *is* better equipped to fight a pandemic than it was in 1918, when influenza swept the globe and infected up to one-third of the world's population. While advances in medical science have given us new advantages in fighting disease, some current demographic trends in the world's 7.8 billion population may contribute to higher vulnerability to a pandemic:

**Increasing urbanisation** – high population density, concentration of people in large cities, present difficulties in curbing the spread of infectious diseases like COVID-19. In 2020, 56% of the world's people lived in cities of 1 million or more. Australia's population is 86% urban. Many low-income countries also have large, densely populated informal settlements with limited access to safe water and sanitation, making preventative measures such as hand washing, social distancing, and self-quarantine often impossible.

**Population mobility** - the volume of population movements, migration and travel as people fly within and across countries, make it faster and easier for viruses to spread around the world. Our connectedness increases vulnerability to disease.

**Population aging** - The share of population aged 65 and over in many developed economies is now 20% or higher and increasing. In Japan, this figure is 29% and in Italy 23%. In Australia 16% of our population is now over the

age of 65. Older populations are at higher risk of becoming seriously ill with COVID-19.

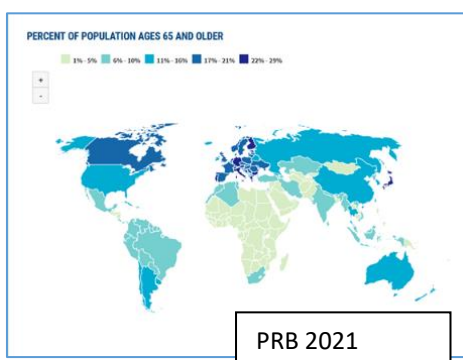
**The Census – reviewing the big picture:** most countries take a census every 5 or 10 years with similar data capture aims and policy implications. For example, Japan, Ireland, New Zealand, and Canada take a census every 5 years. The USA and China took their decadal censuses in 2020. India was also due to conduct its 10-year census in 2021, but due to the pandemic it has been postponed to 2022. India's census results usually take 12 months to calculate and be released - and no wonder due to the scale of this exercise. Just imagine the difficulties of conducting India's census in 16 different languages, across the country's 28 states and 1.4 billion people! By comparison, the Australian Census is quite an orderly operation with a quick turnaround of results. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) conducts the **Census of Population and Housing** every 5 years. This year, **Census 2021 on Tuesday 10 August** will collect demographic, economic, social, and cultural data which can inform government decision-making and planning for health care, transport, schools, roads, services for communities in regional and remote areas, language services and many more.

Meanwhile, at RGSQ we are hoping to re-schedule the lecture *Bushfire - an Intensifying Risk for Queensland* by Lee Johnson soon at the Society premises (and via zoom) following COVID-safe guidelines and to proceed with the lecture by Martin Crotty *Reimagining James Cook and Australian History* on 3 August.

With best wishes,  
Iraphne Childs, President

### References:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021 Census <https://www.census.abs.gov.au>
- Population Reference Bureau (PRB) (US) April 2020 *How Demographic Changes Make Us More Vulnerable to Pandemics Like the Coronavirus* <https://www.prb.org/resources/how-demographic-changes-make-us-more-vulnerable-to-pandemics-like-the-coronavirus/>
- Population Reference Bureau (US) 2021 *Percent of population 65 and older*. <https://www.prb.org/international/indicator/age65/snapshot>
- Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India <https://censusindia.gov.in/2011-common/aboutus.html>



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## Monthly Lecture

### Tuesday 3 August | 7.30pm-9pm Reimagining James Cook and Australian History

by Associate Professor Martin Crotty, UQ

**Location:** RGSQ premises (Level 1, 28 Fortescue St, Spring Hill, Qld) and via Zoom

**Registration essential:** <https://rgsq.org.au/event-4345416>

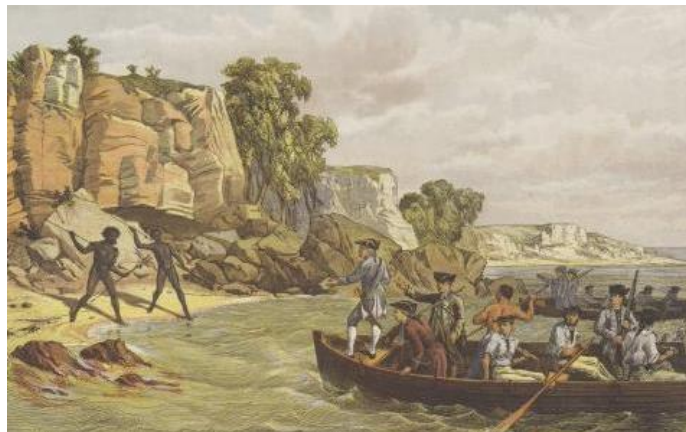


Image: Cook's landing at Botany Bay  
[Unknown author, public domain, via Wikimedia Commons](#)

In this lecture, Martin Crotty will consider the place of James Cook in traditional narratives of Australian History, and how he might be reconceived as Australia wrestles with and reimagines its national past. Cook, he will argue, need not be written out of Australian History, and need not be posted as some form of villain. But imagining a more united and reconciled future requires that we rethink and add nuance to established narratives of Cook as a heroic British discoverer.

**BIO:** Associate Professor Martin Crotty studied in New Zealand before moving to Australia to undertake postgraduate studies at Monash University and the University of Melbourne. After four years of teaching History at the University of Newcastle in NSW, he took up his current position teaching History at the University of Queensland in early 2003. He has since served as the Deputy Dean of the Graduate School and as the Head of School for the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry from mid-2013 to mid-2017.

Martin's major publications include *Making the Australian Male: Middle-Class Masculinity, 1870-1920* (1901), *The Politics of Veteran Benefits in the Twentieth Century: A Comparative History* (2020) and a variety of journal articles, book chapters and edited collections, including *The Great Mistakes of Australian History* (2006), *Turning Points in Australian History* (2008) and *Anzac Legacies: Australians and the Aftermath of war* (2010).

**Please note:** The lecture may be recorded. If you have any questions, please email us at [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au).

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## WHAT'S ON

For all upcoming RGSQ events, please visit the Society's website [www.rgsq.org.au](http://www.rgsq.org.au) under 'What's On'.



### Milne Bay Memorial Library and Research Centre – Lecture and Display

Tuesday 17 August 2021

10 am to 12:30 pm (Lunch available afterwards)

**Location:** Chermide Historical Precinct; 61 Kittyhawk Drive Chermide

**Parking:** Kedron-Wavell Services club carpark about 200m South of the precinct. (21 Kittyhawk Drive). A pickup from the carpark can be arranged if required.

**Registration and morning tea:** Members \$7, non-members \$12 (also donation box at Centre door); <https://rgsq.org.au/event-4187106>

We will meet at the Centre at 10 am for morning tea and afterwards volunteers from the library will give us a presentation on the battle lasting about an hour. This will be followed by a video including scenes from the field. We will then have an opportunity to look at the resources of the Centre. There will be plenty of opportunities for questions after the presentation and video, and while we are having a look around. Lunch will be at the Kedron-Wavell Services Club at own expense.

The World War II battle for Milne Bay took place between 25 August and 7 September 1942 and its conclusion marked the first defeat of Japanese forces on land.

Milne Bay dominates the south-eastern extremity of Papua New Guinea and was strategically significant to both the Allies and the Japanese. It was a potential air base to give Allied support to sea lanes between Australia and Port Moresby and to allow aircraft to be deployed to the north and north-east. For the Japanese, an air base at Milne Bay would have allowed them to bomb Port Moresby and northern Australia and harass allied shipping.

Google Maps Link:

<https://goo.gl/maps/rwwViJo2DoHZ23DV9>

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## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We have much pleasure in welcoming *Rita Hermus* and *Georgia Ellen Walker* as new members of The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland. We hope your association with your new Society is long and mutually enjoyable.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

Iraphne Childs, Martin Crotty, Len Lowry, Bob Reid

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## REPORT: Map Group Presentation Polynesian Navigators

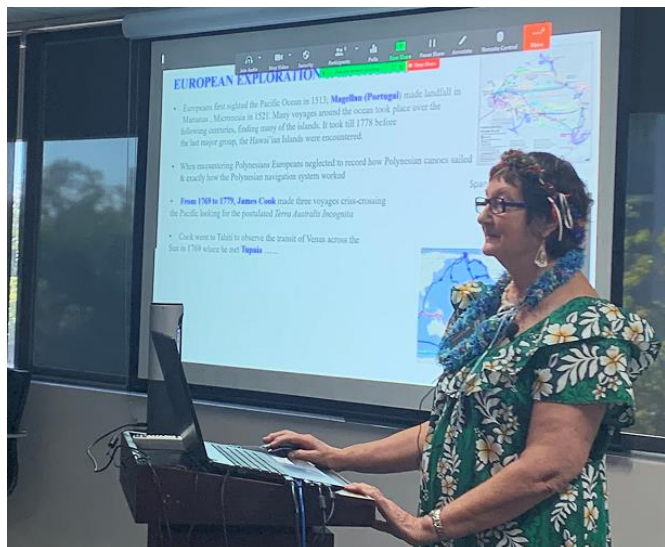


Image: Iraphne Childs presenting to the Map Group

Map Group was privileged to have a presentation by RGSQ President, Iraphne Childs, on the navigation and seafaring skills of the early Polynesian navigators. Iraphne's presentation complemented the recent six-part TV documentary by Sam Neill on the epic adventures of Captain James Cook in the Pacific. Iraphne's presentation covered the geography, geology, weather patterns, volcanism, climate variation, history, and culture of Polynesia. Anthropological evidence suggests that the original descendants of the Polynesian people came from southern China around 2000 to 800BC. Polynesian islands have a volcanic origin in the "ring of fire" and form a collection of islands within the Polynesian triangle encompassed by a perimeter from Hawaii, Easter Island and New Zealand. The Portuguese explorer, Ferdinand Magellan was the first European to visit Polynesia in 1513 but Hawaii was not visited by European explorers until 1778.

Captain James Cook sailed extensively throughout Polynesia during his three voyages and, unfortunately, paid with his life in 1779 in Kealakekua Bay on Hawaii. At the time, he was trying to find a sea route through the ice-flows along the northern coast of North America. Cook formed a friendship with a Tahitian high priest and competent navigator, Tupaia and found that these seafaring people had a mental map of the islands and could use the stars, currents, winds, and a method of dead-reckoning to find their way without any navigational equipment. Polynesian navigators (way-finders) did develop star charts and a reference "map" made from coconut fronds, pandanus roots, shells, and sticks. It has always been a mystery how such a civilisation from southern China could navigate to a group of remote islands to the east when tides, currents and winds would make it difficult for double hulled canoes to sail to windward.

Fast forward to 1964 when three geographers completed a detailed computer simulation of the weather patterns and currents in the Pacific Ocean to prove that people could have sailed a large double hulled canoe to windward, down-wind and across-wind to reach the Polynesian Islands. The Polynesian Voyage Society was formed in

1973 and with the help of Pius "Mai" Pailug, a traditional master navigator revived and passed on the knowledge of early Polynesian navigational traditions. A double hulled voyaging canoe, the "Hokule'a", was built to prove the capabilities and the traditional navigation skills of the early seafarers. The unsupported voyage was successful and completed a distance of 6000 nautical miles from Hawaii to Tahiti. The "Hokule'a" went on to complete many voyages and completed a three-year circumnavigation of the world, returning to Hawaii on the 17 June 2017.

Iraphne gave an excellent presentation, and her research was meticulous. The slides had a wealth of interesting information, and your interest was maintained for the entire presentation.

This presentation was recorded and can be found on the Society's YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2WD4ARJhBDiOxa3qndb4Q>.

I would recommend this presentation to all RGSQ members.

Contributed by Len Lowry, RGSQ Map Group member

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### What's happening on Council?

On 20 July seven Councillors met in-person at the RGSQ in Fortescue Street with two Councillors attending the meeting via Teams online i.e., a quorum of 9. Reports were received from Iraphne Childs (President), Annie Lau (Treasurer), Rachel Honey, Kath Berg & John Tasker (AGC), Rob Cook (Collections), Pamela Tonkin (Property), John Tasker (Young Geographers), Iraphne Childs (Publications) and Lilia Darii (Business Manager). Matters discussed included:

- Budget confirmation for 2021-2022
- Commissions from Adventure Traveller
- RGSQ Insurance 2021-2022
- Submissions to the review of secondary school Geography curriculum by ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority)
- RGSQ presence and contributions by J Tasker and I Childs at GTAQ conference 31 July
- Two new members were confirmed

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### SEEKING VOLUNTEERS - RGSQ HISTORY UPDATE



The RGSQ Publications Committee is planning a project to prepare and publish an updated history of the Society from 1985. We are seeking members

who may be interested in spending some time to assist in checking archival materials for key Society events over the past 25-30 years. If you can help with this project and would like further information, please contact Iraphne at [i.childs@uq.edu.au](mailto:i.childs@uq.edu.au).

## RGSQ PHOTO COMPETITION 2021

### *Advance notice*

We will again be running a photographic competition in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2021, but not producing a calendar for 2022. The theme will be **Australian Urban landscapes**. Submissions will be due at the end of October, with judging in early November. Images will be judged on technical excellence, degree of difficulty and originality/creativity. Winners will be announced in December. More details and instructions on how to enter the competition will be available in the September Bulletin.

So, dig out your great photos taken on past trips around Australia and get those cameras rolling now for some super contemporary shots. Any questions please contact Iraphne at [i.childs@uq.edu.au](mailto:i.childs@uq.edu.au). (photo: I. Childs)



# RGSQ Bulletin

August 2021

### **Lecture/Meeting: Tuesday, 3 August**

*"Reimagining James Cook and Australian History"*  
by Associate Professor Martin Crotty, UQ

### **Activities/Events:**

**5-6 August:** RGSQ Map Group – Upper Brisbane Valley Road Trip

**17 August:** Milne Bay Memorial Library and Research Centre - Lecture and Display

**W:** [www.rgsq.org.au](http://www.rgsq.org.au)  
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**The August Council will meet on the third Tuesday of the month.**

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